

SPIRITUAL

TELEGRAPH

DEVOTED TO THE ILLUSTRATION OF SPIRITUAL INTERCOURSE.

"THE AGITATION OF THOUGHT IS THE BEGINNING OF WISDOM."

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WHOLE NO. 64.

The Principles of Nature.

DR. ASHBURNER AND SPIRITUALISM.

The following article from Dr. Ashburner recently appeared in an English journal, and has been republished by the *Telegraph* and other papers in this country. We are happy to inform our readers that Dr. A. will, in future, correspond with the *Telegraph*, and keep them informed respecting the progress of the cause in Europe.

I had the misfortune to lose my father fifty-five years ago. Although I was but a child, I have a vivid remembrance of him. By the natives of Bombay he was more than respected. He was venerated for his high talents and for his great goodness. It is nothing to feel that such an intelligence is able to make his ideas clear to his son. But you will ask, "What proof have you of the identities of these persons?" This brings me to narrate to you the events of the first evening I spent with the spirits in the presence of Mrs. Hayden.

I had always regarded the class of phenomena relating to ghosts and spirits as matter too occult for the present state of our knowledge. I had not facts enough for any hypothesis but that which engaged for them a place among optical phantoms, connected in some way with the poetical creations of our organs of ideality and wonder, and my hope and expectations always pointed to the direction of phrenology for the solution of all the difficulties connected with the subject. As to the rappings, I had witnessed enough to be aware that those who were not deceiving others were deceiving themselves; and there really exist on our planet a number of persons who are subject to the double falling of character. Having been invited by a friend to his house in Manchester Square, in order to witness the Spirit-manifestations in the presence of Mrs. Hayden, my good friend can testify that I went expecting to witness the same class of transparent absurdities I had previously witnessed with other persons described to me as media. I went in any but a credulous frame of mind, and having, while a gentleman was receiving a long communication from his wife, whom he had lost, under melancholy circumstances of childhood some years ago, watched Mrs. Hayden most attentively and with the severest scrutiny, and having finally satisfied himself that the raps were not produced by her, for the indicated letters of the alphabet, which, written down in succession, constituted words, forming a deeply interesting letter, couched in tender and touching terms, respecting the boy to which that eloquent mother had given birth when she departed from this world. If Mrs. Hayden could have had any share in the production of that charming and elegant epistle, she must be a most nervous woman, for during a good part of the time that the raps were indicating to the gentleman the letters of the communication, I was purposely engaging her in conversation. The gentleman would not himself point to the letters of the alphabet, lest his mind should in any way interfere with the result; and therefore he requested the lady of the house to point to the letters for him, while her husband, seated at another part of the table, wrote down each letter indicated by the raps on a piece of paper.

I was now kindly requested to take my turn at the table, and having successively placed myself in various chairs, in order that I might narrowly watch Mrs. Hayden in all her proceedings, I at last seated myself, relatively to her, in such a position as to feel convinced that I could not be deceived; and, in fact, I was at last obliged to conclude that it was weakness or folly to suspect her of any fraud or trickery.

There are some people who think themselves uncommonly clever and astute when they suspect their neighbors of fraud and delinquency. As for Mrs. Hayden, I have so strong a conviction of her perfect honesty, that I marvel at all any one who could deliberately accuse her of fraud.

In order to obtain an experience of the phenomena in the fairest manner, I asked Mrs. Hayden to inform me whether it was reasonable to think of any particular spirit with whom I wished to converse. "Yes." "Well, I am now thinking of one." It was the spirit of my father whom I wished to enlighten me. No raps on the table. I had anticipated an immediate reply, but there was for a while none.

Mrs. Hayden asked if there was "any spirit who knows Dr. Ashburner?"

Immediately, close to my elbow, on the table, there were two distinct and separate successions of gentle rapping sounds.

The next question was, "Was the spirit he wished to converse with present?"

"No."

"Was there any one present who would endeavor to bring him?"

"Yes."

"Are the spirits who rap near Dr. Ashburner, friends of whom he is thinking?"

"No."

"Will they give their names?"

"Yes."

These replies were signified by rappings to questions put, some audibly, some mentally. Mrs. Hayden suggested that

I should take up the alphabet, which was printed on a card. I took the card into my hand, and pointed at each individual letter with the end of a porcupine quill—my friend, Mr. Hayland, the gentleman of the house, kindly undertaking to put down on paper for me the letters distinguished by the raps. When I arrived at a letter which the spirit desired to indicate, a rapping took place; but at all the other letters there was a complete silence. In this manner I obtained the letters successively, Ann Hurry, the name of one of the most beautiful and accomplished, as well as pious and excellent, persons I had ever known. I had not seen her since 1812. She married two years after, and died in 1815. My father, and most of the members of my family, had been on terms of the greatest intimacy with several branches of the Hurry family, and I had, in youth and childhood, known Ann and her cousins as companions and playfellows. By the aid of the telegraphic signals I have endeavored to describe, I conversed for some time with the charming companion of my early years, and learned very interesting particulars relating to her happy abode in the Spirit-world.

My curiosity had been excited by the different sounds produced by rappings that I heard close to those made by my friend Ann. I asked for the name of the spirit that they represented. The name which came out by the letters indicated on the alphabet was Elizabeth Maurice, another companion of the childhood of myself and my brother and sister—another almost angelic being while on earth, but now, with her cousin Ann, an inhabitant of the third sphere in Paradise. The authoress of the "Invalid's Book," and some other works testifying to a pure, gentle, and refined taste, conversed with me a while; and at last a louder and more decided signal was made to me from the middle of the table. The name I obtained by the telegraphic raps was that of my father. I asked him to communicate to me the date on which he quitted this world for the Spirit-home, and the raps indicated "17th September, 1798." I asked where the event took place, and I obtained the answer, "At Bombay." I asked his age at the time, with many other questions, the replies to which were all quite correct. I kept up mentally a long conversation with him on subjects deeply interesting, and it was productive of a communication from him, which I subjoin:

My dear Son—I am delighted to have this privilege of communicating with you, hoping to dispel some of those wrong impressions which now hover around you in regard to this Spiritual being. Allow a spirit who inhabits one of the higher circles to decide for you on a most important subject, to try to remove from your mind the doubts which perplex you, and to establish in their stead a firm faith in the Creator of heaven and earth. It is he who permits us to make these manifestations, through certain constituted persons, in order to impress mankind with the fact that the spirit shall live in a future state, in a more bright and blissful home. What proof can I give you of the truth of this? You have only to name it, and it shall be granted to you from your father, who has ever watched over you with the care of an angel. Do not doubt what I now say.

Your affectionate father,
WILLIAM ASHBURNER.

I am giving you a short narrative of the first part of my course of experience of the Spirit-manifestations. It is important not to be too diffuse. I am desirous of showing that if the subject be investigated in a calm and bold state of mind, there is no danger of the bad tendencies which have been so severely deprecated. I may not be able to prove to you, and to such as yourself, that there is a sufficient amount of facts to satisfy you of the existence of intelligences absent from the immediate sphere of our own cognizances, but I have at all events been able to adduce to you a number of curious facts, and if these, and more such, be tied together in bundles, and placed as to effect the phrenological organs of a vast number of brains with the attractive force of agreeable conviction, many of the ideas advocated by the *Telegraph* will have a chance of being displaced and forced into the category of negative existence. To take up the impossibility of future existence, is to deny that we are beings of limited capacities, and to arrogate to ourselves the power of finality. No weakness is so ridiculous as that of fancying that we are arbiters of events; that our will, exercised by organs that soon shall rot, is to determine the future fate of a holy truth. How ardently does the bigot fancy he is right! Sincerity may be his merit, if ignorance be the cause of pardon for a foolish sincerity. A new truth, a new event, which, established into a fact, is a new light, makes the antecedent idea pale, and it vanishes before the force of new conviction. I can not express to you the influence on my mind, produced by the facts rapped out by alphabetical signals, that my spirit-friends, Ann and Elizabeth, knew of their cousins Hannah and Isabella having called a few days before at my house, at twelve o'clock, and that they knew I was going from Mr. Hayland's house to No. 17 Palace Gardens, Kensington. They knew the persons I should see there, and on being asked if they were acquainted with any other persons residing in Palace Gardens, Ann replied to me that her cousin, Henry Goodove, lived at No. 2—a house he had not long before purchased.

If these be not facts demonstrative of a future existence, in which friends of former days are now cognizant of the

events occurring here, I do not know what will be sufficient to force your mind to a conviction. But there are only a small part of the numerous proofs I have had of the identity of persons with whom I had been acquainted years ago. I have, in subsequent sources, had many opportunities of holding intercourse with a score of other persons now in the upper magnetic regions of space surrounding this earth—intelligences, some of whom were friends here, and some of whom were individuals of whom I had been desired to learn facts that turned out to be marvelously true.

Had I been inclined, I could have made an equally absurd affair of this serious inquiry, as some have succeeded in doing. My taste does not lean in that direction. When I am convinced that I have a good grip of a hold and sacred truth, it is not an easy matter to shake me from it. I have tested the fact of the Spiritual manifestations most minutely and carefully, and I grieve for those who have concluded against it from a touchy disposition not to accept a truth simply because it does not originate from self, or on account of any other weak and personal consideration. It is easy to go to simuletons and say, your neighbor is a credulous fool, and the simuletons believe it; because, perhaps, they never saw a mesmerized somnambule, under the influence of a magnetic impulse, from the finger, on the organ of self-esteem, obliged to utter the same class of words. You, in your article on "Those Rapping Spirits," were influenced to trot in a groove on the point of dignity. Some infallible judges of dignity there are who can not perceive in mankind any other high qualities but those of cunning and acquisitiveness. Man is a strange compound, and to the philosopher it is a curious subject of reflection how very trifling in themselves are the motives which make the wisest rush into the most foolish and illiberal courses. It is unnecessary, after the notices of the Spirit-manifestations in subsequent numbers of your periodical, to dilate on the deficiencies of philosophical taste that have characterized some of the would-be-considered investigators of the subject. I may say that when I have been impelled by the lower feelings of our nature to feel desirous of attacking them, it has happened invariably of late that I have had affectionate warnings from the Spheres not to be guilty of the error of hurting unnecessarily the feelings of my friends. You will acknowledge that if the tendencies of Spiritualism are to make men more tender toward the feelings of their neighbors, and more mindful of the obligations they owe to kindness and friendship, those tendencies can not be very dangerous, or evil, or pernicious.

With every good wish, I remain, my dear Mr. Holyoske,
Yours, truly,
JOHN ASHBURNER.
No 40 YORK PLACE, May 20, 1853.

THE REASONS WHY.

By WILLIAM ASHBURNER.

ED. SPIRITUAL TELEGRAPH:

As Mrs. Lowe's name is before your readers as a Spiritual clairvoyant, I have thought the following from her might not be uninteresting. My mind was called to it by reading the communication from Mr. Calhoun to Mr. Tallmadge in one of your late numbers. Mrs. Lowe was visiting in my house during the winter of 1850-51, and was there first developed as a clairvoyant. We had many new and deeply interesting communications from Spirits. The following I copy from memoranda taken at the time.

Yours, truly,
AUGUSTUS WYLLIE.
January 20, 1851.

T. being in the Spiritual state, said, "Your brother-in-law, T., is here. He says we are not sufficiently in harmony. We can not progress till we are so. We ought to have more frequent and freer interchange of thought and feeling. So long as there is distrust or reserve there can not be harmony or progression."

Ques. Since you have a medium of communication with us, why do you not tell something new and useful to mankind?

Ans. Our object is to harmonize mankind; to elevate them spiritually, so they may comprehend all knowledge.

Ques. If we could tell something new, would it not induce them to believe?

Ans. No; what we tell will either be within the purview of human knowledge or it will not. If it is, they will say you found it out yourselves. If it is not, they can not comprehend it. But the real objection to your request is, it is not the harmonious and legitimate way of making known truths. Knowledge, to be harmonious and available, must come through the human mind. Wherever spirits find truth-seeking minds, they endeavor to impress, suggest, lead, elevate, and inspire them.

Ques. But would it not please people, and have an effect, for you to tell us something that no one knows? something new and strange?

Ans. Yes; it would gratify that love of disorder which surrounds mankind now everywhere, and in every thing. Ask them where their spirits came from and whither they tend. See if they can tell you that. Let mankind first seek Spiritual knowledge. They will then see that disembodied spirits do assist men in all their useful pursuits. But they are not permitted to do it in the manner you request through media. To

promote harmony, every thing must be kept in its proper department.

But I wish to impress upon you the important fact, that Spiritual influence is the great motive power which has produced all those valuable human inventions that now bless mankind. They ever have and ever must come through the right channel, at the right time, and in the right place. There must be an adaptation of means to ends; a mental want must precede the supply. Suppose the idea of a steam-engine had been presented to the aborigines of this country three centuries ago, of what use could it have been to them? Just the same as it would be to comply with your request, and tell you of things that the human family will not be able to comprehend and use beneficially for centuries to come.

The people who ask you for the evidence which you have asked us for, are blindly groping in the dark, and are not prepared to believe any evidence you may produce. They are enshrouded in selfishness and prejudice, and repel those good influences that are always within their reach. When they ask for evidence, they do not comprehend for what they ask. It is their condition, not the evidence, that is at fault for their unbelief.

You have been questioning why we do not develop some great plan for alleviating the physical sufferings of mankind. This is not the end we aim at, but it will be accomplished incidentally. All suffering and want will eventually cease when mankind come into true relations with each other. The channels through which we are now operating have been opened for the purpose of spiritually improving and harmonizing mankind. Spirits foresee the time when the human family will become perfectly developed and wrought into true and harmonious relations; when one pang of suffering, endured by the most obscure individual in the world, will vibrate through the universe, and immediate and sufficient means be provided for his relief and protection, and he will consider himself the happiest man who is made the minister of love to the sufferer.

THE DAY OF JUDGMENT.

By WILLIAM ASHBURNER.

What most minds mean by "a day of judgment," I have some faint conception of. But from reading the Scriptures, I can gather but little that is not vague or incomprehensible as to the time when, and place where, this judgment is to take place, or of the purposes to be accomplished by it, since with God all things are, and not to be. However the question is to be settled, it is certain that the Christ himself did not know "the day and the hour," the Father only having the prevision and power necessary to prescribe it, and determine the period of its occurrence. As to whether that day, therefore, is near or remote; whether it has already transpired in the fate of the Jews and their religion, or is yet to come, no man, I trust, isegotist enough to suppose that his opinion is infallible—especially in respect to this subject in its application to individuals, in contradistinction to systems of governments and religions that enslave and besot the minds of men, and render the many unaccountable, even to the judgment of the better sort of men. What man of us unendowed with wealth, if even certain of life, can shape his morrow or his coming year? None are competent, mentally, morally, or physically, to subvert or invert the order of things under which they suffer through the mingled cruelty, cupidity, and avarice of their more powerful and more intelligent brethren. The mass of men are ever but parts and particles of one or more stupendous iniquities called governments or religions, for which the individual can be no more responsible than the particles of dust are individually responsible for the storms that fling them to the ocean.

One thing, however, seems certain, that an irresistible power ("whence coming no man knoweth," and whither tending no man can certainly know), called "Public Opinion," starting to the selfishly wise, the treacherous, and tyrannical everywhere, is sitting in judgment upon mankind, and shaping the viewless future, while voices from the Spirit-land, and the old and familiar tones of long-absent friends, come back to earth to revive the hearts while quickening the intellects and loves of those they knew and prized. Those only should tremble in view of these things who willfully make of religion a cloak of tyranny, or of power a right to destroy and afflict; or who, assuming to be their "brother's keeper," keep him in servitude or commercially enslaved, dwarfing intellects and hearts, and stultifying while subverting body and spirit; persecuting those, overreaching those, and oppressing their kind by art and cruelty that devils alone would incarnate or seek to impose upon the feeble and unprotected? Where, in the impending judgment, would the ungodly sinner stand who deals not in mercy with his fellow-man, who constantly watches every opportunity, when his wants are great, to enhance his difficulties, and lessen his bread and domestic comforts—where, I say, would such stand if the Almighty were as hard of heart as himself? Answer, ye men of Moloch and Mammon, and ye of garrets and cellars—sinners by compulsion or of chance—pray God for a day of judgment.

W. J. YOUNG.

WAYSIDE THOUGHTS.

By WILLIAM ASHBURNER.

THE RECEPTIVE MIND.—The truly wise man will ever cultivate an inquiring and receptive state of mind, and hail with joy the discovery and evolution of every new truth—knowing what folly it is to set bounds to the eternally progressive nature of man, to attempt to limit the infinitude and the immeasurableness of God's Universe. He will cultivate a love for the beautiful, the symmetrical, the harmonious in Nature and Art. He will seek to render himself a medium for the influx of great and elevating truths from the higher worlds—to assimilate himself to the character of the pure in heart, the heroic in purpose, the noble and magnanimous in life, the gentle and beautiful of soul.

SYMPATHY.—We need sympathy, and can not live without it. It is like "the shadow of a great rock in a weary land," or a fountain by the wayside to the thirsty wanderer. It is more precious than rubies to the true and loving heart, which yearns for the advent of a happier day, when we may wander on the sunny margins of the soft-flowing rivers, and "through the green pastures," inspired by love divine; when the sun shall look smilingly out from the "windows of morning," upon a land where no slave shall clank his chains, nor war-horse tramp the plain; but where Love shall reign, and the Angels of Peace and Beauty sit smiling on the mountain-tops!

A WOODLAND SCENE IN AUTUMN.—How calm and harmonious the scene here presented by Nature. How unlike man's tossing, troubled soul. What a soft quietude prevails—a stillness that is broken only by the sighing of the breeze, the lonely chirp of the insect, and that peculiar solitary note of the wild-bird which betokens the departure of summer. The mountains, hills, trees, and rivers—of what wondrous and holy things do they speak. They proclaim the wisdom, the harmony, the love immaculate of their Supernal Author! Types of beauties and glories that never fade in a world Celestial. Assuredly it must be that in these grand and beautiful forests, these still and quiet groves, away from the discords of the restless world, that we are nearer the Kingdom of heaven, and more approachable by the Spirits of Harmony and Purity. While I sit here, I feel their presence near. The thrills of joy run through my soul, and I "mount upward as on eagle's wings." "Sorrow and sighings flee away," and I seem to be drinking at a Fountain of Peace, "whose waters fail not." I almost fancy I hear the angels whisper, and feel the touch of their gentle hand, as they lead me, saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it." In no man-made temple have I ever found the happiness and serenity of soul that is attainable here. In these wild-woods is a Temple that God has made, where the angels are his ministers, teaching lessons that are more felt than heard, and here the grasshopper and wild-bird sing anthems, and the breezes blow hosannas!

MUSIC.—O this music! how has it calmed my troubled soul, lulled every care to rest, and presented visions intensely beautiful to my spirit's eye. Bowers of ambrosial brightness—flowery islands far away sleeping in placid glory beneath the mellow tinge of summer's sunset skies—a kindred spirit whose love has enveloped me as with a mantle, and whose soul spoke joy and goodness in the gaze of an all-radiant and ever-eloquent eye—rose-shadows and silvery rivers, and Peace and Harmony, like beautiful doves, descending from the world supernal—such have been the visions presented to my view, as I have dwelt entranced under thy soothing and exalting power, O thrice glorious and ever-blessed Music.

New Brighton, Pa., June 20, 1853.

CHARACTER OF THE OPPOSITION.

MOORE JOY, LANCASTER CORSET, Pa., July 11, 1853.

MESSRS. PARTRIDGE AND BRITTAN:

Truth always had, and ever will have, its charms to attract the honest inquirer. I am cautious of what I receive—not ready to receive at I have—without reader and charity enough to make of admissions—that he condemn the veracity or the judgment of others—conscious of my own defects—read, reflect, and compare the marvelous statements with others—analyze, and finally experiment. The result was, that I found a response, I invited others to see and hear for themselves, kept a journal, and now have a collection of many communications, some of the most exalted character, worthy to emanate from angelic beings, and others of lower grades.

To nearly all the communications names were given, when desired, and, so far as my knowledge goes, the character of the communication and name given, compared with the character of such individuals, so that it is evident what a man "says he will also keep." I of course had to expect the treatment every independent man will receive, who has candor and integrity enough to express his honest convictions, however they may clash with those "wise and good men," who feel it their duty to keep other minds in check. Too lazy or too bigoted to investigate for themselves, they take it in high dogdom when others do, and since all wisdom is with them, and such things are contrary to their notions, therefore, facts at variance can not be facts, they must be humbug or delusion, and they will remark every week and come to visit you, but will show their eyes, and stop their ears, rather than see or hear any thing that might humble them in their self-conceit. No, they, like the Church of Rome, are infallible, and though the system of autocracy—now condemned to be heretical—is now universally admitted they do not admit it, however, in so doing, they confess their fallibility. Let those who have ours understand.

TRUTH.

now Messrs. Editors, if I were disposed to retaliate the charge of misrepresentation," I could do so with perfect propriety and with strictest justice But I will not do it I will leave your readers to judge of the fairness and candor of the writer, after I shall have stated the reasons prompting his attention to them. A writer who is under the necessity of resorting to such means to sustain his literary argument, is unworthy of notice. He has no other resource than to "overbear," before, that he allude to at all. He says, "for my assertion that the facts of three things was to subvert the authority of the Bible, and scandalize our friends and our country itself." I have virtually Mr Tillamash's friend Mr Simmons' own authority in the words italicized in the copy of the latter gentleman's "He then gives a *garbled* extract from my work, leaving out one whole line, which goes to strengthen and give weight to the whole, and then adds his own comments, and reproaches the entire work with being "untrue, and yet claims that he has given me authority for his comments and his conclusion, which goes well with "rank blasphemy."

I will now introduce the sentence as it originally appeared in my letter garbled or excruciated by this writer, and your readers will then judge my opinions on this subject. I remarked "From the foregoing I have given the subject, I agree with the Rev Adin Ballou, who has written the most rational and satisfactory explanation I have seen, that the *three things* mentioned in the above passage are the *unscriptural righteousness* mentioned in the Bible, in the popular religious tract, and the *unscriptural* church, in its habits. It can not be done again, and the first two will

